

**ABSTRACT**

A system and method that uses XML schemas to specify the set of allowed calls, to invoke multiple function calls, either hierarchically or sequentially, and to specify the calls in such a way that they can be distributed across multiple processors. An XML schema mechanism  
5 defines the format of permitted requests and, importantly, validates the requests to ensure that they match the published signature of the functions provided by the service application. Additionally, the schema mechanism validates the request to ensure that they match the published signature of any further service application that it may need to employ. In addition, supplementary information added either within the schema itself or in supporting documents may  
10 be processed programmatically. A request may consist of a hierarchy of function calls, either nested within one another or executing in series.